

**Appl. No. 09/912,604
Amdt. dated July 21, 2005
Reply to Office action of April 22, 2005**

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have received the Office Action dated April 22, 2005, in which the Examiner: 1) rejected claims 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph; 2) rejected claims 1, 2 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Dell (OptiPlex XG1p Installation guide) in view of Sound Blaster (Sound Blaster Live! Player 5.1 User Guide) and in further view of Baker (U.S. Pat. No. 6,185,627); 3) rejected claims 3-6, 8 and 9, 16 and 16 as being obvious over Dell in view of Sound Blaster, Baker and Live! (Live! IR Quick Start); and 4) objected to claims 10-14 and 17-20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but otherwise allowable. With this Response, Applicants amend claims 1-3, 7 and 15-19. Based on the arguments and amendments contained herein, Applicants believe all pending claims to be in condition for allowance.

The § 112, second paragraph, concerns have been addressed by amendment.

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the audio controller circuit, as now claimed, "determines which of a plurality of connectors, if any, have external playback devices coupled thereto, determines whether at least one such coupled external playback device comprises a digital or an analog external playback device, and, based on such determinations, selectively transmits analog audio signals to the internal audio speaker and selectively transmits at least one of an analog audio signal, a digital audio signal, and a mute signal to output circuitry associated with each of said connectors." None of the art of record appears to teach or suggest this combination of limitations. At least for this reason, claim 1 and all claims dependent thereon are allowable over the art of record.

Applicants amend claims 2 and 3 to maintain consistency with the language of claim 1.

Applicants amend claim 7 to specify that the switching circuit "transmits digital audio signals to a selected audio output connector depending on a state of a mute signal." Applicants do not find this limitation in any of the art of record. Accordingly, claim 7 and all claims dependent thereon are allowable over the art of record.

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The Examiner concluded that claim 17 contains allowable subject matter. Applicants have incorporated many, but not all, of the limitations from claim 17 into claim 15. Applicants, however, believe the Examiner will now find claim 15 allowable for much the same reason as the Examiner found claim 17 allowable.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. It is believed that no extensions of time or fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company's Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,



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